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A Hoosiers Rhymes

and

Colorado Legends

MY TRIBUTE

*From Ohio River's bottom lands
By a Hoosier's pen, a few odd lines,
To Colorado's mystic manitou,
Her azured skies and columbines.*

Emeline Fairbanks Mem. Library

By

WILL LAVENDER
Rhymer of the Rockies

INDIANA ROOM
PAMPHLET FILE

cop. 1



WILL LAVENDER
Humorist and Reader



A HOOSIER'S RHYMES
and
COLORADO LEGENDS

Emeline Fairbanks Mem. Library

THE HOUSE OF LAVENDER

Ever since the reign of the second William and the first George, and during the period of the Commonwealth in England, through wars and religious strife, there has been a William, James, or George Lavender. Kings have been beheaded, dynasties have fallen, commoners have held the guiding hand only to relinquish to Kings and Queens again. When John Wesley was preaching, Bunyon languishing in the Bedford jail, or a Cromwell was being beheaded, the Lavender babies were being named George, William, Mary, Elizabeth, or Ann, as the succession of Kings and Queens transpired. They are scattered now, and widely separated, from England's shores, to far away Australia and America. Yet you will find a little grand daughter of the last William, living in the old home city of Ramsey, Huntingdon. She lives with her parents at the old wayside manor; The Bridge House. In the village of Forty Foot Bridge, near the historic Abbey, where Oliver Cromwell sacked and looted the churches during England's religious strife.

By turning a small dial in my dining room I have heard the voice of their King, and the children's laughter in that far away land of the fens.

The soldiers of Cromwell may have trampled through my grandmother's garden of thyme and lavender flowers for all I know.

—The Author



AUGUSTANA COLLEGE

Rock Island, Ill., May 15, 1932

In the western series of poems by Will Lavender the manner of treatment is executed somewhat similar to Walt Whitman, Carl Sandburg, and Vachel Lindsay. It is a style of poetry much in vogue at the present day.

It seeks to glorify the commonest things of daily experiences. In *The Birth of the Rainbow*, *Rockies Rhymer*, *On a Rampage*, and *How the Sunsets Are Made*, the author is at his best.

—Rev. E. F. Bartholomew, Professor of English Literature and Philosophy

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY

Rock Island, Ill., April 22, 1933

Dear Mr. Lavender: I consider the readings I have heard you give very excellent. The material which you have produced is original and new. In your writing you are extremely fortunate in your ability to interpret the beauty of nature and to touch up the common things of everyday life in such a charming way that you reveal the beauty, the humor, and the pathos of those experiences. In so doing you have dignified the labor and the struggles of those who laid the foundations for the social and economic life of the Middle West. Your manner of presenting your own compositions from the platform is pleasing. You grip the audience and hold their attention.

I am suggesting to the program committee of the Kiwanis Club that they arrange to place you on the program in the near future.

—Justin Washburn

SLAYTON LYCEUM BUREAU

Chicago, Illinois

I have had the pleasure of hearing Mr. Lavender in some of his original poems and sketches.

He is an artist of the Riley type. He is earnest and sincere of purpose, unaffected, and natural in the delivery of his own charming poems. His stories and verses are from the heart, and cannot fail to please the most critical.

—Lulu Tyler Gates, Reader

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

IN MEMORIAL

For the memorial service, conducted by The Southern Indiana Civic Association and the Boonville Press Club, in Nancy Hanks Lincoln Park at Lincoln City, the resting place of the mother of Abraham Lincoln. Representatives of three states claimants of equal honors pay homage each year to her memory.

TO THE MOTHER OF LINCOLN

Honor! Just a wreath of laurel
Gathered from the countryside.
We are honored, a favored people,
Bowed, with arms outspreading wide.

Breathe a loving benediction
Upon a mother and a son.
One, whose given task was ended.
The other his work had just begun.

For her noble spirit wearied,
Gently she was laid to rest.
Resting in the quiet, sleeping
In a land she loved the best.

May stars keep watch, while shades of evening
Spread a cover for the night.
Till sunbeams come to kiss the morning
When they usher in, the light.

A plaintive requiem, a cardinal calling
Sounds from the forest, green and still,
Sleep in peace till the dawn's awakening,
When the day breaks forth on yonder hill.

That day, somewhere, beyond the shadows
There will be no parting, neither pain.
That day with its triumphant ending,
Mothers and sons shall meet again.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

MOTHERS

God just lends 'em to us fer a while,
He calls 'em home, and then
The spirit of their sacrifice to us
He gives, that we might carry on, an' thus
We children get 'em back again,
To treasure in our hearts fer keeps.



DEDICATED TO MINE

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NOTE

The early Hoosier Rhymes were written in Colorado Springs. The Colorado Legends in Rock Island, Ill.

INTRODUCTION

Some years ago, (the number is like the proverbial number of the retrospective years of the old maid) the traditional stork was winging his way from the Southland to the place of my destination. Over the border line and cane brakes of Kentucky, skimming the waters of the Ohio, it sped for a light in a clearing in the bottom lands of Southern Indiana, and there left me to my own devices.

They say poets are born, and not made, and truly that is just the beginning. They have a row to hoe the same as other folks. I have had a hard row to hoe ever since, and one it seems to me with a double portion of weeds. Also a few briars for good measure.

You readily see by what a small margin I missed being born a Corn Cracker, and while I am a Hoosier, I was then in reality only a little sucker. My teeth had not yet sprouted, and my gums had not sufficiently hardened for corn cracking. But I had a happy faculty bestowed upon me, that of easily making friends. I exercised it at once, and immediately began making connections, both right and left.

I survived and flourished in spite of "chills and chiggers," and grew to manhood. I was a big "sucker" for ever leaving Indiana, and I am a bigger Sucker now, for I have adopted Illinois as the state wherein to be content.

I said the old stork came from the South, because according to the theory of heredity, my mother (who lived there) gave me my fiery temper, and likewise my sunny disposition.

I have always loved the old place down there in Indiana. The boyhood associations, and the pleasant recollections of Uncle's farm are very dear to me. It seems as though the fragrance of the lilacs and honeysuckle hangs like incense over the memories of those never to be forgotten days. Their charm and the delights and experiences of a Hoosier boy, just don't happen to a boy born in any other place.

I am proud of the state which gave me my birth-right, and justly proud of the record of her illustrious sons. She has given much to this nation of ours. In time of need statesmen of courage and convictions, have advanced to proclaim them. In time of war brave and courageous men have volunteered in her defense. In music, art, and letters many distinguished men who have won fame and renown, claim that the soil of the Old Hoosier State from which they sprung is accountable for their achievements. She gave to us that beloved author and poet, James Whitcomb Riley, the children's choice of a man of letters; a star of such magnitude to which we writers would fain hitch our wagons.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

"AWAY DOWN THERE IN INDIANA"

Seems as I kin see it now
The garden, where I used to plow.
I always did love the old home somehow,
Away down there in Indiana.

How the mockin' birds 'ed sing,
How the lilacs 'ed smell in spring,
And how the bumble bees 'ed sting,
Away down there in Indiana.

I kin hear the same ole dinner bell,
An feel the coolness of the well,
Jest like when I use to dwell,
Away down there in Indiana.

Chills and chiggers? oh we had some,
Asmy! Yes when the hayin' time 'ed come,
Thems what makes you feel to hum,
Away down there in Indiana.

An there wuz lonesome times, an yet
Folks dont set around en fret,
Why Id just like to take my duds and get
Away down there in Indiana.

MOTHERS

God just lends 'em to us fer a while,
He calls 'em home, and then
The spirit of their sacrifice to us
He gives, that we might carry on, an' thus
We children get 'em back again,
To treasure in our hearts fer keeps.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

WHAT MARKS THE END OF A MOTHER'S DAY

You know sometimes I git t' wishin',
I wuz just a big brown bear,
An git up once when winter's over
An never have t' brush your hair.

Goin' t' bed wouldn't be so bad, if
After once you git tucked in,
It's tomorrow, with the rooster a crowin'
You have t' git all out ag'in.

A woodpecker wakes you in the mornin'
Tap, Tap, tappin' he's on the roof.
Sounds like's right here on your bed stead,
He telegraphs and then flies off.

Perty soon you hear a whistlin'
Taint a boy, It's a mockin' bird.
He whistles right down through your winder,
All different tunes you never heard.

Then it's happy day with sun a shinin'.
The fish 'er a bitin' down in the slough,
On a day like this, can't work in the garden,
A boy's got too many things to do.

What marks the end of a mother's day,
It isn't done when the prayers are said,
All the hopes, the love, and the longings,
Are wrapped in a boy to be tucked into bed.

Last thing he knows he's kinda dreamin'
When Ma comes in to take a peep,
The good night kiss he's never a knowin'
Her little boy is sound asleep.

An' the darksome days, an' spells of weather,
An' clouds when the sun aint shining through,
Oh mother and son will breast 'em together,
Each one wishin' their dreams 'ed come true.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES



LET WINTER COME

When the leaves is turnin' yellor,
An' the apples is gittin' red,
When all the things is put down cellar,
You needn't worry 'bout bein' fed.

There's mince-meat, jam, an' jelly,
All in a row up on a shelf;
My! I'd bust myself a-tryin'
T'eat it all up by myself.

You know, I like to watch the leaves a-fallin',
An' I hate to see 'em, too,
Fer I can hear the school-bell callin'
An' winter's coming, whew!

It kind a makes me shiver,
But it's nice to know what's there,
Waitin' fer a little feller,
On the shelf right by the stair.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

"BUMBLE BEES"

One of the pleasures we boys at my Uncle's farm indulged in, was fighting bumble bees.

The fun was doubled when we had a boy visiting from the town. We then could show Walter how to catch them in a jug of water. Walter was selected of course to put the jug on the most advantageous spot for the undertaking, also Frank was chosen to prod the nest with a pole just when that spot was reached, and there's where the fun began.

Armed with a paddle we tackle the bumble bees, as they return to the nest to deposit the honey. With a buzz, buzz, zip and a plunk each bee was given his quietus with neatness and dispatch.

In case the line didn't hold and one or more bees got through, it is safe to say you double your efforts to get away, with the goal forgotten, you try for a safety, and that is in flight.

There were times when the paddle method was not so effective.

Uncle Tom enjoyed a little fun with boys also, and didn't always tell us boys where the bumble bees' nest was, so when you drove the little mule hitched to a hay rake over the place, why the cloud of bees began to thicken, and the movements of the mule for once began to quicken.

Like Shakespeare you question whether it was "to be or not to be."

Of one thing you can be certain it's your next move and you don't wait to be told either.

BUMBLE BEES

Them bumble-bees is the fuzzies things
You kin find in the whole creation.
With the softes buzz, that ever wuz,
There sting's a swell sensation.
I member once, my brother Ed

Got stung mightnigh all over.
We wuz fightin' bumble-bees nests,
Down in the patch a clover.
You couldn't hardly tell him
He looked so awful funny.

His eyes an nose an mouth an chin
Wuz swelled all in to one. He
Couldn't see or smell or eat
For mighty nigh a week,
He'd motion with his fingers,

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

Whenever he'd want to speak.
But my! He had the dandies time
Although he'd fret and whine,
He didn't chop no kindlin' wood
For the longes, longes time.

I did though, I couldn't go
A fishing any more,
So I stumped my toe on purpose
An got it good an sore,
Then Eddie had to fetch the cows,

Why spose he couldn't talk.
That don't hurt one-half so bad
As if you couldn't walk.

GOIN' UP

Aint you kind a tired son?
Come git up on the wagon,
You'll never head the "Grand parade"
With streamers all a draggin'.

Things are bad, but they might be worse,
Depends on where you're headin'
I'd rather be alive and drive a Ford
Than fill a hearse, a dead on'.

The crookedest road will lead some place,
Long lanes all have an endin'
So take a spoon, and stir things up,
They surely are a mendin'.

Tack the pickets on the fence,
An git the gate to swingin',
Draw up the belt another notch
An git your ax to ringin'.

You'll find some dregs in every cup,
No matter what you're drinkin'.
Jest skim the cream from off the top,
Tastes better, I'm a thinkin'.

It's easy jest to drift along,
But when the rocks are showin',
To keep the course and swim you'll find
Will cause a lot of blowin'.

So blow your horn, I'll steer the bus,
We'll make it sure as shootin'.
We passed the place called Waterloo,
We're goin' up, a toot tootin'.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

HOW WILLIE'S PANTS GOT WET

I like to row, an' pull an oar
Sometimes your back gets purty sore,
A pullin' oars and bendin' so
Reminds me of the "Ohio."
I used to live there when a boy,
An' mother too. Seems like no joy
Is half as good now she aint here
To share 'em. And the little tear
That will come down's jest got to stay
The hands that wiped 'em is put away.
The angry words, The mean things done
Can't be took back now she's gone.
I remember once I broke her rule
When she sent me off to Sunday School.
But down to the river my steps was bent,
To see the boats. My how they went.
I soon wuz pullin' in this posish
With great long sweepin' strokes—when swish
I slipped a lock and somethin' fell
I got right up too quick to tell
Fer I wuz in my Sunday best
An' that boat leaked. Wet? I guess.
My pantaloons wuz wet clean through,
An' I wuz round the back side too,
But I yanked 'em off to git 'em dry
'Fore I went home, but try and try
I couldn't git the blame things done
By dinner time, an' right in the sun.
When I got home, Ma knew a way
To git 'em dry. An' I must say
She warmed 'em up, with me in too
I thought the linin' 'ed split in two
En for a while I couldn't set
Down on my pants where they got wet.
But I like water same as you
To take a bath in, an' when you're through
If the water's cold, it makes you jump,
An' then your heart goes thumpty thump.
The circulation goes as fast
You can't tell where you rubbed it last.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

THE MULE'S SOLILOQUY

Mose was a cotton top darky of Old Kentucky, and he had for a companion a Kentucky jinny mule. They worked together, that is, they passed the time away together. Mose and his mule were inseparable, that is nearly so. There was only two things that could accomplish this feat, and they were a pair of feet.

Yes, the pair of heels belonged to the mule, the contact end was in a pair of pants. They belonged to Mose, and were always on because that was the only pair he had. And after a violent eruption between him and his little mule he was compelled to sit in the grass till the necessary repairs were made to his cotton patches that had suffered during the encounter. The rents and tears were like furrows plowed through a field.

After these were taken care of, he turned his attention to his anatomical posterior regions. I don't think they required any stitches to make them presentable, er, I mean serviceable, because Mose could not accomplish such a task unaided, and being a delicate subject, he preferred to give it his own personal attention.

You see the mules in Kentucky all go barefooted, and as their heels cause abrasions only, leaving parts of contact black and blue. In Mose's case I presume black was the prevailing color.

An application of some soothing ointment was all that was necessary, and while remaining sore for a while, he was soon in shape for the day's march, or rather equipped with a convenient resting place after the march of the day.

But going back to the story of the mule; (it's a shame to take a slam at the women folks if they are not here to defend themselves) but you have heard of the cause of man's downfall, wine and woman, but in Kentucky fast horses are sometimes responsible.

Now darkies can't afford fast horses, so their fancy turns to mules, and it's strange, that in choosing a mule partner there is a tendency toward jinnie mules rather than a jack. This may account for this one-sided conversation given and affirmed by Mose.

He said his little jinnie could understand what he said, minded better than his old woman, and could surely talk.

The following story is what Mose declares the mule said according to the revised version of the book of Moses, about the down-trodden mule. The traditional mule is always pictured with his feet up and under something else than his own weight, and are generally seen trodding up, instead of being down-trodden. Mose calls it—

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

"THE MULE'S SOLILOQUY"

Now there ain't no use a kickin' when they hitch you to
a plow,

An' keep you goin' round an' round, don't seem like sense
no how,

An' there ain't no use a kickin' when they put the muzzle
on,

Jest to keep a mule from bitin' off a little stalk of corn.

An' there ain't no use a geein' and a hawin' to a mule,

Fer 'bout that time they're bawkin', both the jackass an'
the fool.

Again, don't start to kickin' when they tie you to a cart

An' you're waistin' time a tryin' if you aim to make him
start.

For when a mule once gits a notion, it's might nigh bound
to stay

Better try a little coaxin' I doan know but I's built that
a way.

When they want's to go to meetin', Uncle Mose and
Sallie's folks,

Then's the time I have my inin', when I plays my little
jokes.

Down the road it am so muddy, folks say it do surely
stick,

Now's the time it pays to kick in. An' I do a little trick.

So I back up with my ears down. Mose is down with a
big black lash—

I put my hind feet in the buggy, when my heels go
through the dash.

An' I kick and I keep on kickin', somethin' doin' when I
kicks,

Mose, he keeps on beatin', and I kick between the licks.

When he's tired he starts a teasin', rubs my belly an'
pats my back,

An' tells me, "Be my little jinny, I doan want a jumpin'
jack."

Then I walk off pert and sprucy, jest as innocent an cool,

Like I was intendin' all along I's a gwine to school.

You know Mose is a shiny deacon in dat Baptist Sunday
School,

Doan swear none, but keeps a sayin', "Gol darn dat
ornry jinny mule."

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

FRIEND SHIP

Just a little parody on the names of a few intimate friends who compose the HAPPY BIRTHDAY crowd.

When one has a birthday we hie away to some park or "into the open" along the banks of Old Mississippi River.

There we build a camp fire and broil a steak, or with fried bacon and coffee we celebrate with a pot luck supper.

During winter months we gather at the home of a friend and just visit and play games, marking the mile stones in the game of friendly intercourse.

FRIENDSHIP

Come sail away to the park and play
Dull care is on the wane,
Its jolly ho, to live and know
Happy days are here again.

ALL ABOARD

The welcome call comes on the wire,
Ella's rounding up the bunch,
The Happy Birthday picnic crowd,
Invites you out to lunch.
We've a pilot, she who makes the pies,
And here's the favored crew,
The Sudlows, Eitemans, and Lamonts,
And a group from Moberg too.
There's Paulsons girls and Kruegers four,
The Boyds, they moved away,
Of course in making trips like ours,
Can't expect 'em all to stay.
There's Grandma Siegrist always comes,
An Ma and Jimmie Witter,
Ma says she can show the very place
An bumps where the skeeters bit her.
Now Grace and the Mattisons left the ship
And a family, name of Pickens,
What's left I guess is all on board,
And counted like the chickens.
We're off, Tra la sings out the mate,
Then a boat gives us a hail,
Look what we got, We stopped to lift
The Stambaughs over the rail.
We Sala way to a shady nook,
Where we camp in a greenwood isle,
There friend with friend in a friendly way,
We feast in gypsy style.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

Fleecy clouds float over head,
Green velvet is on our floors
The walls, festooned with swaying plumes
In our Grill Room out of doors.
Say, Charlie's had an accident,
His wait is round the Tonns,
He Myers down, We all detour,
With the roast beef and the buns.
Oliver gets the coffee jug,
We always let him pour,
He fills the cups, we empty 'em
And clamor for some more.
We fill our plates a time or two,
Know what I mean, an when
The cakes comes round for toppin' off,
There's a funny feeling then.
'Twas Reschke, but we took a chance,
If the buttons hold the things,
What the girls still pin their faith to most
Is safety pins and strings.
Though the skeeters bite we laugh and joke
Till twilight's on the wane,
Its jolly jest to live and know
A birth Daighs here again.
In-Clement weather? What care we
Though adverse winds may blow,
Our friend ship rides out any gale,
That's why we Lovett so.
Then store these happy times away,
In the ship's hold to retain
With fire light's magic and Lavender,
They unfold in sweet memories again.



A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

THE SEVEN LEGENDS OF THE UTES

Once in a very great while you will find in the solitary waste places of the Rockies a character who belongs away back in the stamping grounds of the early prospectors period of the pick, pan and shovel days of gold mining.

In their wanderings they have many strange tales to tell, many of them having been closely associated with the Indians have gleaned wierd and uncanny traditions of various tribes that have been handed down in unwritten language and signs, where a traveler through these historic lands would fail to get because a grunt and a sign from a wrinkled old Indian is meaningless to us.

The following picked up in rambles through remote places in the Rockies of Colorado years ago prompted the author to give his version in verse to add to the historic and scenic enchantment of Colorful Colorado, and to account in a measure for the many attractive features that everywhere abound.

One of the oldest, (a complete rainbow circle has been sometimes seen upon the ocean.) The Indian version is that in the famous Ute pass there once hung such a circle, and that a lake held captive in the mountain top broke away and leaped out over a precipice through the rainbow and carried the lower half with it, where it was lost in a rocky cave. An artist found it one day, or a pool of colors formed from the wreckage, and this he used, to paint the beautiful scenes that hang like pictures everywhere on mountainside canyon walls and waterfalls.

Another version of the rainbow is that a shooting star of light remained suspended in its flight, forming an archway, bridging dawn and twilight, and people traveled from one day to another by this magic stair.

An artist climbed the pathway one night placing garlands of flowers on the rise, and a star on the tread of each step, then draped a ribbon over all, and behold in the morning it became a rainbow of bright colors.

The gorgeous sunsets are explained by the accidental upsetting of the artist's pot of rainbow colors on the clouds by the sun as he journeyed home to his rest at the close of day, and as they drip through the rifts they make the magical changes and because of the different combinations no two sunsets are alike.

The Indians stand in awe of the sun, and worship it as a Deity. They could not understand why it always came to rest at the close of each day to the same place. It was to enable the artist to replenish the gold on the sun beams and tint the robes to be used in ushering in the coming dawn.

So the sun always sets in the West.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

THE GREAT MANITOU

Many of the picture writings left upon the rock walls contain stories of the sun.

All artists break loose from their sedate calling and go out for a frolic, and so this one of the Rockies had a jollification and played havoc with the Indians, animals, and scenery in his attempt to "paint up the town," and proves without doubt how the Silver Tip got paint on his tail, how the burro got a stripe, and the rocks their colors, and the rattlers their diamond markings.

He is responsible for the Columbine's blue coat, and the pine trees their needles, and the fleecy fringes on the clouds.

It explains vividly the process by which the beautiful colorings were wrought with the aid of the orenda (medicine or magic) of the painter of the Rockies. The great Manitou.

HOW THE BEAR GOT HIS SILVER TIP ROCKIES RHYMER ON A RAMPAGE

It was long, long ago, just how long I don't know
When half of the rainbow got lost;
But a sick painter found it, with a bunch of girls round it
In a pool where the bow had been tossed.
There was all kinds of colors, red and blue and some
others

And the maidens were dyeing their frocks,
Of the queer things he did, when the girls were all hid
You will find painted there on the rocks.

First he unhooked the pot from the end of the bow,
On the mountain he placed his cocked hat.
He used up the gold, for who'll ever know,
It will never be found, and that's that.
From the frocks he made flowers to brighten your bowers,
Now I'll show 'em a trick, maybe two.
What a change a little paint brings
And it's strange all the quaint things
It just shows what a painter can do.

He put gold on sunbeams, and silvered the moon
He sprinkled the stars up on high,
On the sky a little blue, on the columbine too,
And a frieze on the clouds going by.
In retouching a star, he reached a little too far,
In their holes went the paint, there's no doubt.
That the rattlers cross patched, and the lizzards were
scratched
As they wiggled and scraped getting out.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

His step-ladder slipped—His new smock got ripped
Couldn't fix it, for he didn't know how,
So he spotted the ponies, on the cacti stuck posies
Then he started an Indian pow wow.
How they whooped when they danced, and hopped as they
pranced,
The chief, he stood by looking grave,
They drank the red water, the chief's fairest daughter
Had left in her home of the brave.

He painted squaw's blankets, he speckled the trout,
Put streaks on the faces of men
He stained his white pants, on a hill of red ants,
He'll never go near them again.
The swift mountain sheep, saved his coat by a leap
But the bear got a tip on his tail,
The jack rabbit jumped, the bison he humped,
And both are still "hitting the trail."

He put stripes on the burro, down his back like a furrow
Who objected in accents quite plain.
But it's all hunk-a dory, for the bulk of my story,
Has the marks of a tale (tail) in the main (mane).
Though somewhat contrary this mountain canary
Knows his ropes, as he knoweth his air,
And the song of this bird whenever its heard
Gives proof that the sound is still there.

After "rocks and the rills, and the woods templed hills"
There was nothing else left but the sun,
And it slipped away, unfinished they say
For it set, with the painting half done.
Then said the painter as the sunlight grew fainter
I guess we will call it a day.
Though it may have been folly, It's been rather jolly
Where away then Old Scout, and away.

HOW SUNSETS ARE MADE

The descriptive verses tell of the strivings of any artist
to put a sunset on a canvas.

To reproduce a Colorado sunset is impossible. How
the painter makes them I have outlined in the Indian's
version "*How Sunsets Are Made.*"

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

HOW THE SUNSETS ARE MADE

Climbing the steeps a painter once reached
In a place where the snow drops grew
The end of the rainbow, and found an old pot
Filled with colors of every known hue.

Here at last were the shades he had oft tried to make
What landscapes with canyons and streams;
Each blossom a frock with bonnets to match,
And a sunset, these haunted his dreams.

He made little slippers that just fit the peas,
His needles he stuck on the pines.
From the sky took a bolt of rarest blue cloth
Made a coat for the pale columbines.

Old Sol came sailing on his homeward way
Making rifts in the clouds just to peep.
To be sure that the world was snug for the night
Ere he rolled in his blanket of sleep.

Startled, the painter upset his pot,
The color in brilliant cascade,
Is still dripping through the rifts and rents,
And that's how the sunsets are made.

In the springtime the flower mother marshals her kin
Each family appears just the same
Little Pansy, or Rose, may have a new dress,
But there's never a change in the name.

There's none can describe, naught can compare,
With a sunset's magical change,
Just a glimpse of glory as the scroll is unfurled,
In the glow of the last mountain range.

THE FIRST COLUMBINE

An artist asleep, in a wild rocky glen
He dreamed of a flower maiden fair,
And when he awaked the columbine shaped
With blue and lavender there.

Taking spurs from the riders of famed purple sage,
To add poise to the nod of the head.
He usurped the springs from the ranch equipage
And moss from the shade formed a bed.

Adding green from the pines and blue from the sky
To the mists at the cataract's brink,
Its shower of tears, he caught as it fell
For the rarest of flowers to drink.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

The rocks he then tinted with his Indian Paint
Brush,
Put caps on the mountain peaks brown,
A canopy of color was spilled over all,
When his palate was turned upside down.

Of fair lands and flowers, song and story can tell.
A land famed for sunshine and snow,
I could paint pictures too, If I only could dwell,
Where Colorado Columbines grow.

THE WRECK OF THE RAINBOW

A lake held high in the crags like a cup
Broke over its brim rimmed with snow.
A silver white arch in a veil of spray,
It sped to the canyon below.

In a pool of gay colors in a deep shady nook
It was found by an artist one day.
In its wild lofty leap the mad waters took
A half of the rain bow away.

He took from the rainbow the famed pot of gold
Where it swung like a bird in its bed.
With the gold he burnished the beams of the sun
Then he filled it with color instead.

He sprinkled the plain with red and white stars,
The clouds like Venetian boats,
Were blazed and fringed with laces and shawls,
The canyons like Joseph's famed coats.

When he had finished with mountain and plain
What once seemed so barren and brown,
Was all on parade in gala array,
With a medal, new coat, or a gown.

Then he hung the pot back in the bend of the bow
Where he lives, and it's never been found.
He visits the gardens dispensing his wares,
And his sunsets are known the world round.

When he dips his brush in the pot where it hangs
In the archway, a garland of flowers,
He's retouching the sunsets, and rainbows that fade,
When they're lashed by the wind and the showers.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

THE BIRTH OF THE RAINBOW

A shooting star in a veil of light
Had arched the sky one summer night.
Then all was still. The whole world sleeps.
When up the stairway softly creeps
O'er path that bridges night and day
And sunlight where the shadows play
From twilight till the dawn.

He marks the steps. The Break of Day.
Each rise a flower to show the way.
Each tread a star lest pilgrims fall,
Then drapes a ribbon over all,
For a flowered canopy.

Streaming in with regal train,
The sun comes marching through the rain,
He marches through in sturdy stride,
The arch, whose portals spreading wide
But frame a radiant morn.

Transformed, the wreath of bridal flowers
Refreshed by sun and sparkling showers.
He who climbed the magic stair
Had left the rainbow hanging there,
'Twas there the bow was born.

THE SUN RIDES HIGH

Peep Peep—Through rifts they leap,
The shooting shafts of grey and light.
Spikes from ancient battlements, and bars,
Like torches tipped from fading stars.
All marked the pathway through the night
Of the coming dawn.

Part the curtains, Awake! Awake!
Here rideth the day.

The glitter of beams now softly gleams
At the close of day. The circuit's run.
The clouds for his chariot. The sun rides high.
Changing robes as he arched the sky.
He reaches home. The day is done.
Tis the twilight hour.

Draw the shades. Sleep and dream.
Here abideth the night.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

TO A LITTLE PARK (In Illinois)

Rarest of gems nestled in with bright flowers,
Walled by steep rocks like sentinel towers,
To guard and to shade from our sight,
The trees and the greens bend o'er for a cover
Shading a nest as the wings of a plover,
So the shadows may play with the light.

A garden run wild, where the cedars are growing,
On a carpet of green, by a stream gently flowing,
On its way to a river somewhere.
With the music and rhythm as with twists and with turns,
In its bed edged with moss and a tangle of ferns.
Then is lost round the bend over there.

The columbines nod in a shy friendly greeting,
While the perfume is freighted on the wind for our meet-
ing

In this nook where the fairies must dwell.
Just to drowse and to dream, let the world go its way,
Let my soul share the beauty of Thee for today.
For the morrow, where it leads, who can tell?

Then as sweet as the blossoms that cling to the walls
Just as clear as the stream, with its tiny water falls,
As it gurgles and splashes along.
May memory's fair picture of Thee ever stay
With splashes and ripples as we march on our way,
To the air of a poor poet's song.

A SUMMER GIRL

A shady nook, beside a brook,
My love and I were wooing;
The words we guessed; I gently pressed
Her. Doves o'erhead were cooing.

A dainty head, brown tresses spread
A mouth—'twas most alluring.
Soft eyes of blue drooped, yet I knew
Their glances were assuring.

Could I be blamed, my love untamed?—
Such ecstasy in kissing.
Now, "I'll be blamed," my love is tamed,
My summer girl is missing.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

MY COLUMBINE—IN A LITTLE CABIN HOME

It was there that I first met you, 'neath the pines,
Seeking where to find the bluest columbines.
It was there love found a way, dear, what was in my
heart to say,
When you promised you would share my cabin home.

Was there ever such another blue in eyes,
Matched only by the Colorado skys.
Let us take our love together to a cabin in the lea.
Plant a garden just of roses 'round our home.

'Tis the swaying of the pine trees that I hear.
Love's first kiss that I remember, dearest dear.
Just a June time there alone, dear, could for all life's ills
atone
Could I have you and a little cabin home.

'Do you know how much I love you? Do you care? Do
you mind?
How it takes away the sting of all that grinds
'Tis your love that ever keeps me, as I climb the moun-
tain steep
Just to reach a little cabin that is home.

Chorus:

In the heart of the Rockies let me roam.
In your heart, little flower, let me dwell.
With the roses for a tether
Let us bind our love together,
And through fair and stormy weather,
Just stay home.

CIDER SONG

'Tis the song of the mill making cider,
In a land of the long long ago,
Of a man and a maid, who were lost in the shade
In a woodland where sweet apples grow.

It was made from a quince or an apple
In a mill 'neath an old apple tree
Whether apples or quince, we've had love an' cider since
Will you dance and drink cider with me.

Chorus:

Come join me in song
As you journey along
Come walk in love's garden with me,
Take a sip or a sup
From my lips or my cup;
Come and drink apple cider with me.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

SHOE STRING AND THE SHOE

Once there lived a little shoe string
In a shoe store with a shoe
Whose sole was sad and heavy
As he did this maiden woo.

Mine eyes are for you only
Sang the shoe love to his lace
Come closely entwine your life in mine
'Twould be one long embrace.

CHORUS

Oh you've got no kick a coming Mr. Shoe, Mr. Shoe,
For long have I been loving only you, only you,
I'm but a dainty pair of strings,
With a heart as light as wings,
I've been waiting for a lover shoe to tie me.
I'm but a dainty pair of strings,
With a heart as light as wings
And I dearly love to have a man to buy me.

Now you know there's lots of mating
Done in shoe stores in the spring,
And Oh the pain and misery
The misfit mates can bring.

But this pair lived quite happily,
A priest came in to buy
And gently drew their lips close to
And the sacred knot did tie.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

COLORADO

TRIBUTE

*From Ohio River's bottom lands
By a Hoosier's pen, a few odd lines,
To Colorado's mystic manitou,
Her azur'ed skies and columbines.*

ATTRIBUTE

To snowy spires and sunny plains,
I attribute inspiration.
At best, the poor returns you'll find,
Are but an imitation.

CONTRIBUTE

I borrowed from her gorgeousness,
And awe, from silent places.
Fringe I've taken from the clouds,
To match my-lady's laces.

CONTRIBUTION

To make amends, I thus create,
A problem past solution,
Restoring treasure that I took
To call it a contribution.

KAINTUCKY

If'n you find a place to match it,
Why youall sure is mighty lucky.
An' if'n you do, why dat aint nothin',
It wont be like Ole Kaintucky.
The mornin' sun he comes a bowin',
Sayin' howdy. Your mighty right
He comes again in de evenin',
When he dips to say good-night.

We got two little shoats a fattenin'
Close by in de hickory lot.
An' thars corn enuff in a clearin'
Fer the winter's hominy pot.
An' a possum round somewhar a waitin',
To be cetched to fill de chinks.
An' a pipe, an' all the smokein's,
When your' restin' while you winks.

Even de Lawd, He stops His chariots,
As dey travel through de sky.
With de little chill'en ridin'
In His train a goin' by.
He lets 'em down to spread de blossoms,
On de folks dats laid to res'.
Why dis land in Ole Kaintucky
Give me it. Fer it's de bes'.

A HOOSIER'S RHYMES

TO THE LATE MR. GROUNDHOG

Say, Ole Mr. Groundhog, Whar you be?
Hidin' in a round log seems to me,
Er away down South whar the sunshine is,
An' us folks doubled with the rheumatiz.

Whar's dat Spring you said wuz near?
Jest 'round the corner, It hain't been here.
'Stead a spadin' garden, I's a shovelin' snow,
'Stead of smilin' sunshine, why it's two below.

But we got plenty weather, so you needn't come back,
It's prognosticated in de almanac.
Stay down in your hole, your tombstone's built,
On de front it reads in letters of gilt—

"Here lies Mr. Groundhog, in a groundhog's lot,
As de flower in de field is, in de oven is not,
No more deceivin', no more to fool,
Now, There jest ain't no such animule.

He lied when he's livin', He lies now he's dead,
That's what the figgers on the tombstone said.
Reckon he went to heben? Oh no, no,
Ef you lie like a groundhog, you go way down below.

FAREWELL

Farewell,

A wandering soul found kindred mate,
Each yearned love's sweet embrace.
They only said farewell, for Fate
Decreed that they should part,
Yet love each other.

Farewell.

Was it to spend few blissful hours,
Becalmed on life's great sea?
Was it to blight these souls of ours,
Or snugly lash our barks
And sail forever?

Farewell.

Sweet memories. Oh why retain
In psychic fringe of dream?
Had we not met, no sting of pain.
'Twas best. It was to be
Farewell forever.

Farewell.

There's none can know how partings steep
The heart in bitterness,
But he whom fate has caused to weep,
Apart in sadness live
Alone forever.

BOONVILLE PRESS CLUB

Boonville, Indiana, April 14, 1933

My dear Mr. Lavender: Have just finished reading your two poems: "What Marks the End of Mothers Day," and "Mother's" and I am deeply impressed by them. The sentiment expressed in both of them have real power to move the heart-strings. I am sure that every "grown up" boy that reads both poems will feel that tug and will remember mother and think of what she means to him.

I wish you success with both poems. They deserve it. With sincere wishes, I am

—Ernest W. Owen—President, Boonville Press Club

AUGUSTANA SCHOOL OF ORAL EXPRESSION

March 4, 1933

It is not so much what you say, as it is how you say it, which counts with an audience.

The charm of the Hoosier rhymes lies in the interpretation of them. The composition of them results from a mingling of abbreviations of words used by the easy-going people of the Southland, with the dialect of the colored people. The ability to write them and read them with adequate expression is an inherited rather than an acquired accomplishment.

Mr. Will Lavender, who was born as far south in Indiana as possible and yet retain the distinction of being a Hoosier, inherited this gift of composition and interpretation as his birthright. His program of original rhymes and humorous stories of boyhood days away down there in Indiana is sure to please any audience fortunate enough to hear it. Every number rings with truth and sincerity and inspires as well as entertains those who hear it.

—Iva C. Pearce, Head of Speech Department, Augustana College

Des Moines, Iowa

As Mr. Will Lavender was formerly a Hoosier he recalls the wording of ideas which is interesting to many people.

Mr. Lavender is a man of strong character and cooperates with the best citizens to improve humanity through civic organizations and personal sympathy. He presents truths in comic expression which is one method that is interesting. Written material that has valuable content and is interesting will have a valuable effect.

—A. J. Burton, a Former Hoosier Schoolmaster, Director and Principal East Elkh

ROCK ISLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

April 5, 1933

Dear Mr. Lavender: I have heard you read some of your poems and I think the men in the Rock Island Kiwanis Club would like to hear you tell some of your experiences and read the poems which you have written.

The poems are characteristic of many phases of Hoosier life and they indicate that you have an understanding of the deeper things in human nature. I am quite sure the program would be much appreciated by the whole group.

—Owen B. Wright, Chairman of Prog. Comm. of Rock Island Kiwanis Club

WITTER AND WALKER Attorneys-at-Law

April 18, 1933

To Whom It May Concern: This is to certify that I have been intimately acquainted with Will Lavender of this city for several years and I regard him very highly.

He is a poet of marked ability, and is a very fine entertainer. I believe he will be assured a place on the Lyceum platform. I remain

—J. F. Witter

FIRST METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Rock Island, Ill., April 24, 1933

To Whom It May Concern: I have heard Mr. Will Lavender in his readings of original Hoosier dialect and quaint philosophizing. I, personally, have enjoyed his reading and I believe his work will be quite popular with the general public.

Mr. Lavender is a Christian gentleman. His readings are chosen with fine discrimination and are of high idealism without any possibility of taint or offense. His personal integrity is above reproach. I commend Mr. Lavender and his programs to any who desire an evening of good, clean, entertainment.

—Rev. Ernest J. Campbell

MOTHERS

What marks the end of a Mother's Day,
It isn't done when the prayers are said,
All the hopes, the love, and the longings,
Are wrapped in a boy to be tucked into bed.

LET WINTER COME

When the leaves is turnin' yellor,
An the apples is gitten' red.

NEIGHBORS

'Taint what you get, sometimes it's a givin'
What makes you be happy, an a neighbor to me.

FRIENDSHIP

Some folks and us, we hie away,
To a nook in a green-wood isle,
There friend with friend, in a friendly way,
We feast in gypsy style.

MOTHERS

God just lends 'em to us fer a while,
He calls 'em home, and then
The spirit of their sacrifice to us
He gives, that we might carry on, an' thus
We children get 'em back again,
To treasure in our hearts fer keeps.

PUBLICATIONS

- Thoughts that Come in the Night.....50c
Rock Island in Story and History.....25c
(Paper cover Indian design 30 Ills.)
When the Hot Water Bottle Leaks at
Night (a folder, humorous monolog).....10c
A Hoosier's Rhymes and Colorado
Legends50c
My Colorado Columbine Girl
(A song of the pines and columbines.)